

To Whom It May Concern:

I received a notice this past weekend of some regulations that the FCC is proposing in reference to broadcast localism, that have caused me deep concern. Part of the concern and obligations of the FCC is to insure that the community is receiving radio programming that meets their individual needs and desires. For this reason I am writing to ask you to please consider the modifications you have in place. Although I listen to other stations, about 90% of the time, my radio is tuned to a couple of commercial-free frequencies that provide me with both positive and uplifting music and news (e.g. Air1 radio). I used to listen to other radio stations, but after constantly listening to perverse language and crude/vulgar topics found coming from both music lyrics and radio hosts, I chose to change what I listened to, so as not to become desensitized and adopt this mentality and way of life. I sought after a radio station that I knew was clean, something I would not be embarrassed to have playing in front of little children or the elderly. These radio stations also have news broadcasting and "morning shows", and although they do report current happenings in the world that can be seen in newspapers, they also balance it out with positive news stories, featuring such things as faith and heroism.

That is why I find it discouraging to learn of this proposed modification to your current set of rules that could potentially eliminate these radio stations (as well as others similar to it). Although I briefly read through the proposal, I must admit that I was lost in a lot of the technical jargon. A few of the paragraphs in particular worried me.

First of all, in Paragraph 26, the proposal speaks of community advisory boards. While I agree that this is beneficial and oft times necessary to provide adequately for the needs of the individuals within the community, I am anxious at the thought of how these boards might be selected. If radio stations exist for a specific purpose/mission, and are not publicly funded through advertisements, but through listeners' donations, why is it that the public should thus be able to have a governing rule? I am a member of a "listening advisory board" for one of these radio stations (which was mentioned in the following paragraph 27), and thus am able to choose which music I would like the station to play in the future. However, if people from the general public that are placed indiscriminately into various boards possess personal or political agendas, this could cause numerous negative effects and potential destruction to the station. What power could an individual have in the demise of a radio station that it neither listened to beforehand nor desired to have playing over a local frequency due to conflicting viewpoints/worldviews! I am encouraged by your statement that if the "licensee already has formal groups in place with which it consults to determine the needs of its community, it should be deemed to have satisfied this requirement." I believe that this should perhaps go one step further however, and give the individual stations the chance to create their own community advisory board, rather than having it be selected for them.

In addition, I was concerned about the issue discussed in Paragraphs 28-29. I do not know the extent of operations by automated stations, nor do I know if my stations even use these (although I am aware that their headquarters are elsewhere), I am discouraged at the thought that it would be a

requirement to have at least one personnel within each local area facility. For those stations that have smaller budgets (or stations that are listener-supported, non-profits like my own), this action could have dire consequences. With a budget already stretched, having to add additional (and at times unnecessary) employment could cause a station to go under with inessential monthly expenses. If they are sufficiently seeking and meeting the needs of the local community in areas such as weather and news, does there necessarily need to be a person present on site? Furthermore, another topic I was confused as well as concerned by was that of AM stations/FM translators. This maybe an unsubstantiated concern, but would this effect the listeners of those FM stations?

I am encouraged by the thoughtfulness of the FCC for their concern of these and other topics in general. I am in agreement with their desire to be able to reach “undeserved audiences” and for equal opportunities for broadcast speakers (though I believe once again, that this should be in conjunction with where the funding is obtained for operation, so as not to impede on first amendment rights by forcing a “public forum” that may not necessarily coincide with the objectives/mission of that particular station). I recognize that I am but one person amongst numerous comments, and I do not understand (nor most likely fully appreciate) the work and time spent in these operations and considerations. I ask however that you do not use general modifications that would not only blanket general stations that could easily afford the changes, but also the smaller stations that would struggle to stay in existence. How ironic would it be to create these changes in order to “better serve and meet the needs of individuals in the community”, while at the same time eliminating the stations that did just that?

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Amber Virkler